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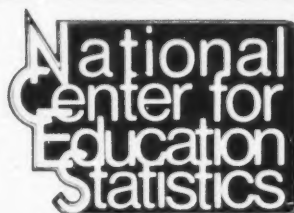
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ABSTRACT

This survey was requested by the National Commission on Excellence in Education to provide input from schools, colleges, and departments of education (SCDE's) on improving the quality of teacher education. Survey questions sought information on preferences for recommendations to make curriculum more rigorous, raise entrance criteria, and extend programs beyond four years. Information was also sought on recommendations that had been implemented. Questionnaires were sent to 432 representative institutions with a response rate of 92 percent. Types of institutions included public and private SCDE's offering doctoral, comprehensive, general baccalaureate, or specialized programs. About one-half of the department heads highly preferred making curriculum more rigorous and raising admission standards as methods of raising the quality of teacher education. High implementation of these recommendations was indicated. Little support was given to the recommendation that programs should be extended beyond four years. This report provides descriptions of the characteristics of the surveyed institutions and their programs, and a brief analysis of findings. Survey data is presented in tabular format and a copy of the questionnaire is included. (JD)

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bulletin

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Educational Research and Improvement

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Survey of Teacher Education:
Perceptions of Methods for Improvement

Almost all (94 percent) of the Nation's schools, colleges, or departments of education (SCDE's) have implemented one or more measures to improve the quality of teacher candidates during the past 5 years, according to a recent survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) through its Fast Response Survey System (FRSS).

The survey was requested by the National Commission on Excellence in Education to provide input from SCDE's on the issue of improving teacher education. During hearings held throughout the country, the Commission was presented with often conflicting recommendations on how to improve the quality of teacher education. Although many of these recommendations required changes in Federal, State, or local policies, several applied directly to schools/departments of education.

Some of the recommendations directed to SCDE's included raising the standards for entry into the teacher education program, making the curriculum more rigorous, and extending the program beyond 4 years. Among the methods suggested for improving the curriculum were increasing requirements in liberal arts (general studies), increasing professional studies, and increasing the amount of student teaching. The survey was designed to obtain the opinions of heads of schools/departments of education regarding these recommendations. (Descriptions of the survey and the survey questionnaire are included in latter sections.)

Improving Teacher Candidate Quality

When asked about measures implemented to improve teacher candidate quality, over four-fifths (85 percent) of the SCDE's reported making the curriculum more rigorous during the past 5 years, and almost three-fourths (74 percent) had raised the criteria

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for entering the teacher education program (see table 1). About one-half of the department heads highly preferred these measures as methods of raising the quality of teacher candidates in their institutions (52 percent for strengthening the curriculum and 47 percent for increasing entry standards).

Another suggested method for improving teacher quality is extending teacher education beyond 4 years. SCDE's gave this method little support, a finding that contrasts sharply with the recommendations of many education authorities, both in testimony to the Commission and in education literature. Only 5 percent had extended their teacher preparation programs, and only 15 percent expressed a high preference for doing so. Moreover, a majority (57 percent) gave this measure a low preference rating (not shown in table). It is not clear whether this lack of support represents the perception that such reform is undesirable, infeasible, or both.

Classification of Institutions

The survey findings were also analyzed using a newly adopted classification of institutions of higher education based on total degrees awarded and the fields in which the degrees are awarded. Each 4-year institution is classified as either doctoral, comprehensive, general baccalaureate, or specialized.^{1/} Approximately 60 percent of all 4-year institutions (varying proportions in each of the four categories) have an SCDE with an elementary or secondary teacher education program.

Department heads in doctoral, comprehensive, and general baccalaureate institutions expressed similar preferences for raising entrance criteria and making the curriculum more rigorous. Furthermore, they had implemented these measures to a similar degree (table 1). Doctoral institutions were more in favor of extending the program beyond 4 years than the other institutions but were no more likely to have implemented this measure. Responses from SCDE's in specialized institutions, however, differed from those of SCDE's in other institutions on two measures. First, specialized institutions were less likely to highly prefer raising the criteria for entrance. On the other hand, they were more likely to have implemented curriculum improvement during the past 5 years.

Public/Private Institutions

Department heads in public institutions expressed a higher preference for raising entrance standards and extending the program than did those in private institutions (table 1). In addition, proportionately more public institutions had raised the criteria for entering their teacher education programs.

^{1/} Doctoral institutions are characterized by a significant level of activity in and commitment to doctoral-level programs. Comprehensive institutions have a strong post-baccalaureate program, but do not engage in significant doctoral-level education. General baccalaureate institutions focus primarily on undergraduate baccalaureate education. The specialized category includes professional and specialized institutions. Specialized institutions that have SCDE's are primarily business, divinity, and teacher colleges, with teacher colleges comprising less than half of these institutions.

Change in Degrees Conferred

The percent change in the number of bachelor's degrees in education conferred between 1975-76 and 1980-81 was computed for each SCDE. As a result, SCDE's were classified into three categories: high decrease (40 percent or more decrease), moderate decrease (between 10 and 39 percent decrease), and low decrease/increase (less than 10 percent decrease or increase). ^{2/}

Some differences in responses by percent change in degrees occurred, but there was no consistent pattern. Proportionately more institutions with small decreases or increases in degrees had raised their criteria for entering their education programs during the past 5 years, compared with institutions that had large decreases in degrees; however, all three groups were similar in preferring this measure (table 1). Institutions with small decreases or increases, to a greater extent than the other institutions, also preferred extending the program beyond 4 years.

Characteristics of SCDE's

Of the 1,206 SCDE's offering elementary or secondary teacher education programs, 11 percent were doctoral institutions, 32 percent were comprehensive institutions, 49 percent were general baccalaureate institutions, and 8 percent were specialized institutions (table 2). Approximately 108,000 bachelor's degrees in education were awarded in 1980-81. ^{3/} Over three-fourths of these were conferred by doctoral and comprehensive schools (31 and 47 percent, respectively), while 18 percent were awarded by baccalaureate schools and 3 percent by specialized schools. ^{4/} The average number of bachelor's degrees per institution ranged from 36 in general baccalaureate schools to 264 in doctoral schools.

^{2/} The number of bachelor's degrees is based on data obtained by NCES through the earned degrees portion of the annual Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) for academic years 1975-76 and 1980-81. The percent change was computed for SCDE's for which earned degree information for the 2 years was available and which awarded more than 15 bachelor's degrees in education in 1975-76 (a weighted total of 943 institutions). Institutions that awarded 15 or fewer degrees were excluded from the percent change analysis, because the percent changes in degrees for these institutions were based on too few degrees to be meaningful.

^{3/} In 1980-81, there were about 141,000 newly qualified teachers, according to the National Education Association (Teacher Supply and Demand in Public Schools, 1981-82). Included were the 108,000 bachelor's degree recipients noted above, and about 33,000 other persons who received bachelor's degrees in other fields or master's degrees, but who were also qualified to teach for the first time.

^{4/} Estimated from the earned degrees portion of the NCES Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) covering the 1980-81 academic year. Data on bachelor's degrees in education were missing from this file for 14 SCDE's in the sample (an estimated 78 SCDE's in the universe).

Of the 1,206 institutions providing elementary or secondary teacher education, the majority of doctoral and comprehensive schools are publicly controlled (75 and 66 percent), while most of the general baccalaureate and specialized schools are privately controlled (82 and 98 percent). Overall, 38 percent of the SCDE's are public institutions and 62 percent are private. In 1980-81, public institutions awarded 78 percent of the bachelor's degrees in education, while private institutions awarded 22 percent (not shown in the table).

In the 1975-76 academic year, 155,000 students received baccalaureate degrees in education. In 1980-81, the number had dropped to 108,000, a decrease of 30 percent. Doctoral, comprehensive, and baccalaureate institutions all experienced about the same percent decreases (30-31 percent) in baccalaureate degrees in education over this period, while specialized institutions averaged a 17 percent decrease.

Improving the Teacher Education Curriculum

No consensus emerged from department heads on methods to improve the teacher education curriculum. "Increasing general studies" and "increasing the amount of student teaching" received high importance ratings from 30 and 28 percent of the SCDE's, and low importance ratings from 28 and 40 percent (see table 3).

"Increasing professional studies" was perceived as least important; only 15 percent of the department heads rated it highly important, while 41 percent said it was of low importance.

Department heads who considered additional general studies as highly or moderately important (71 percent) also indicated which of three specified fields should be increased. Language/communication skills was the leading field (79 percent), followed by mathematics (65 percent), and science (45 percent).

Classification of Institutions

In ratings of methods to improve the teacher education curriculum, responses varied according to institutional type, particularly for specialized institutions; however, since the number of specialized schools is small, many of the apparent differences were not statistically significant. One difference that was significant concerned the importance of professional education studies (table 3). None of the specialized institutions considered increasing professional studies to be a very important means of improving the curriculum; for the other types of institutions, ratings of high importance on this method ranged from 11 percent (baccalaureate schools) to 23 percent (comprehensive schools).

Public/Private Institutions

On the whole, perceptions of methods to improve the curriculum were similar for public and private institutions (table 3), although public institutions attached higher importance to increasing professional studies compared with private institutions (21 percent vs. 11 percent).

Graduation Requirements

Nationally, SCDE's require elementary school teacher candidates to take 31 semester credit hours 5/ of professional studies and 10 credit hours of student teaching, on the average (table 4) (see attached questionnaire for definitions of these requirements). For teaching at the secondary level, requirements average 19 credits in professional studies and 10 in student teaching. 6/ The required hours in these areas, however, vary widely across SCDE's. For example, about 10 percent of the SCDE's require 46 or more credit hours of professional studies in their elementary program, while another 10 percent require 19 or fewer. Based on an average of 120 credit hours needed to graduate with a bachelor's degree, the average professional studies and student teaching requirements constitute about 35 percent of the total credits at the elementary education level and 24 percent of the total at the secondary level.

While most teacher training occurs in 4-year programs, about 5 percent of SCDE's have 5-year programs, most of which are in California. There, a fifth year of study is required for full credentials, including 18 hours of professional studies, 12 hours of student teaching, and a bachelor's degree in a non-education field. Therefore, California requires slightly more student teaching, on the average, but considerably fewer credits in professional studies, particularly at the elementary level. Individuals can teach in California with preliminary credentials that require a bachelor's degree and 24 credit hours in education (12 hours each in professional studies and student teaching). The remaining year of study, including 6 hours in professional studies, must be completed within 5 years.

In elementary teacher programs, the core professional studies curriculum consists of 45 percent theory and 55 percent methods, on the average. This pattern is reversed in secondary programs, which average 56 percent theory and 44 percent methods. Although the "ideal" proportion of theory and methods in professional studies has been a subject for debate, some respondents argued that this question imposed a false dichotomy. According to them, theory and methods should be, and frequently are, fully integrated in all education courses.

Classification of Institutions

Although requirements for student teaching and professional studies generally are similar among the different types of institutions, several significant differences emerged for the elementary level program (table 4). Doctoral institutions require more credits in professional studies than the other institutions, while specialized institutions require more student teaching.

5/ Quarter credit hours have been converted to semester credit hours.

6/ The survey attempted to obtain general studies requirements as well. However, during data collection, it became apparent that the diversity of program structures among SCDE's and differences in interpretation of general studies and requirements led to inconsistent responses. Consequently, this item was dropped from the analysis.

Financial Effect of Raising Standards

In addition to their assessments of teaching requirements, department heads were asked whether a significant increase in standards would have an adverse effect on the financial position of their SCDE. Two-thirds felt a significant increase would affect them, either moderately (44 percent) or in a major way (23 percent). The other third felt the effect would be insignificant.

Survey Background

This survey was requested by the National Commission on Excellence in Education through the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. The survey was performed under contract with Westat, Inc., a research firm in Rockville, Maryland, using the Fast Response Survey System (FRSS). FRSS was established by NCES to collect small quantities of data, needed for education planning and policy formulation, quickly and with minimum burden on respondents.

In November 1982, questionnaires were mailed to a stratified national probability sample of 423 institutions of higher education representing an estimated total of 1,206 colleges and universities providing general elementary and secondary teacher education; institutions providing training in specialized fields only (e.g., agricultural education) were excluded from the sample. The response rate was 92 percent. All statements made in the text are significant at the 90 percent confidence level or better. Standard errors for selected items are presented in table 5 as a general guide to the precision of numbers in the tables.

For More Information

For information about this survey or the Fast Response Survey System, contact Douglas Wright, National Center for Education Statistics, Brown Building, Room 600, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, D.C. 20202, telephone (202) 254-7230. For single copies of this bulletin, or for more information about the Center's statistical program, contact the Statistical Information Office, at the same address, or telephone (202) 254-6057.

Table 1.--SCDE preferences for methods to improve teacher candidate quality and implementation of these methods in the past 5 years, by SCDE characteristics:
United States, winter 1982-83

SCDE characteristics	High preference			Implemented in past 5 years		
	Make curriculum more rigorous	Raise entrance criteria	Extend program beyond 4 years	Make curriculum more rigorous	Raise entrance criteria	Extend program beyond 4 years
Percent of SCDE's						
Total	52	47	15	85	74	5
Type of institution:						
Doctoral	56	53	28	83	75	6
Comprehensive	54	52	17	84	78	10
General baccalaureate ..	54	47	11	86	74	3
Specialized	33	23	9	96	64	3
Control:						
Public	57	58	21	82	83	6
Private	49	40	11	88	69	5
Percent change in bachelor's degrees in education: ¹ /						
Large decrease	43	50	11	83	71	4
Medium decrease	60	50	10	87	85	4
Small decrease/increase	49	55	24	83	82	10

¹/ Between 1975-76 and 1980-81. Based on data from the earned degrees portion of NCES' Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) for academic years 1975-76 and 1980-81. Data on degrees conferred in one or both years were unavailable for some institutions. In addition, institutions awarding 15 or fewer degrees in 1975-76 were excluded because the percent changes in degrees for these institutions were based on too few degrees to be meaningful.

Large decrease -- 40 percent or more decrease.

Medium decrease -- between 10 and 39 percent decrease.

Small decrease/increase -- less than 10 percent decrease or increase.

Table 2.--Distribution of SCDE's with elementary or secondary teacher education programs in 1982-83 and bachelor's degrees in education conferred in 1980-81, by institutional type

Type of institution	Institutions with elementary or secondary teacher education programs		Bachelor's degrees in education conferred in 1980-81 ^{1/}		Average number of bachelor's degrees per institution ^{2/}
	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	
Total	1,206	100	108,000	100	96
Type of institution:					
Doctoral	130	11	33,800	31	264
Comprehensive	386	32	51,200	47	134
General baccalaureate	590	49	19,600	18	36
Specialized	100	8	3,300	3	45

^{1/} Estimated for the sample from the earned degrees portion of NCES' Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) for academic year 1980-81. Data on bachelor's degrees in education were missing from this file for an estimated 78 SCDE's.

^{2/} Based on SCDE's reporting bachelor's degrees in education.

Note.--Percents may not add to 100 because of rounding.

Table 3.--SCDE preferences of methods to improve the quality of undergraduate teacher education curriculum, by SCDE characteristics: United States, winter 1982-83

SCDE characteristics	High importance		
	Increase general studies	Increase student teaching	Increase professional studies
Percent of SDCE's			
Total	30	28	15
Type of institution:			
Doctoral	29	24	17
Comprehensive	32	25	23
General baccalaureate	32	29	11
Specialized	17	38	0
Control:			
Public	28	25	21
Private	32	29	11
Percent change in bachelor's degrees in education: ^{1/}			
Large decrease	31	33	13
Medium decrease	37	25	17
Small decrease/increase	17	29	19

^{1/} Between 1975-76 and 1980-81. Based on data from the earned degrees portion of NCES' Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) for academic years 1975-76 and 1980-81. Data on bachelor's degrees in education conferred in one or both years were unavailable for some institutions. In addition, institutions awarding 15 or fewer degrees in 1975-76 were excluded because the percent changes in degrees for these institutions were based on too few degrees to be meaningful.

Large decrease -- 40 percent or more decrease.

Medium decrease -- between 10 and 39 percent decrease.

Small decrease/increase -- less than 10 percent decrease or increase.

Table 4.--Average number of credit hours required in undergraduate teacher education programs, by SCDE characteristics: United States, winter 1982-83

SCDE characteristics	Elementary		Secondary	
	Professional studies	Student teaching/practicum	Professional studies	Student teaching/practicum
Total	31.3	10.5	19.0	9.8
Type of institution:				
Doctoral	34.3	10.9	19.6	9.4
Comprehensive	30.6	10.7	18.1	9.8
General baccalaureate ..	31.7	9.8	19.4	9.4
Specialized	28.6	13.0	19.3	14.7
Control:				
Public	31.8	11.1	18.6	10.1
Private	31.0	10.1	19.3	9.6

Table 5.--Standard errors of selected items

Item	Estimate	Standard error
National averages:		
Credit hours required in professional studies (elementary level)	31.3	0.4
Credit hours required in student teaching/practicum (elementary level)	10.5	0.2
Credit hours required in professional studies (secondary level)	19.0	0.3
Credit hours required in student teaching/practicum (secondary level)	9.8	0.2
Percent of all SCDE's:		
Indicating high preference for raising entrance criteria ...	47	2.6
Indicating high preference for making the curriculum more rigorous	52	2.8
Indicating high preference for extending the program beyond 4 years	15	1.4
That raised entrance criteria in the past 5 years	74	2.3
That made the curriculum more rigorous in the past 5 years	85	2.7
That extended the program beyond 4 years	5	1.1
Indicating high importance for increasing student teaching	28	2.2
Indicating high importance for increasing professional studies	15	1.7
Indicating high importance for increasing general studies ..	30	2.8
Percents and averages for SCDE's, by institutional type:		
Percent general baccalaureate schools indicating high preference for making the curriculum more rigorous.....	54	5.0
Percent general baccalaureate schools indicating high importance for increasing professional studies.....	11	3.7
Percent specialized schools indicating high importance for increasing student teaching.....	38	20.7
Percent specialized schools indicating high importance for increasing general studies.....	17	11.1
Percent doctoral schools indicating high importance for increasing general studies.....	29	4.4
Average credit hours required in student teaching in specialized schools (secondary level).....	14.7	4.2
Average credit hours required in student teaching in comprehensive schools (secondary level).....	9.8	0.2

Note.--Statistics used in this report are subject to sampling variability. The estimated standard error of a statistic (a measure of the variation due to sampling) can be used to examine the precision obtained in a particular sample. If all possible samples were surveyed under similar conditions, intervals of 1.645 standard errors below to 1.645 standard errors above a particular statistic would include the average result of these samples in approximately 90 percent of the cases. For example, for the first item in the table (average number of credit hours required in professional studies at the elementary level), a 90 percent confidence interval is from 30.6 to 32.0 credit hours ($31.3 \pm 1.645 \text{ times } .4$). If this procedure were followed for every possible sample, about 90 percent of the intervals would include the average number from all possible samples.

Survey Questionnaire

FAST RESPONSE
SURVEY SYSTEM

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202

Form approved
OMB No. 1850-0510
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SURVEY OF TEACHER EDUCATION

This report is authorized by law (20 U.S.C. 1231e-1). While you are not required to respond, your cooperation is needed to make the results of this survey comprehensive, accurate, and timely.

Please answer the following questions for your on-campus, undergraduate regular professional programs for initial teaching certification for the 1982-1983 academic year. Q.I AND Q.II APPLY ONLY TO ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY PROGRAMS AS DEFINED BELOW. THE REMAINING QUESTIONS APPLY TO ALL UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

- **Elementary** includes general elementary, early childhood, preschool, and/or kindergarten.
- **Secondary** includes all subject specialties and specialization in senior high, junior high, or middle school teaching.
- **Excluded from elementary and secondary programs:** special education, physical education, fine arts education, occupational/vocational education, and school support personnel (e.g., guidance counselors, librarians).

- I. Enter the graduation requirements for undergraduates students in your elementary and secondary teacher education programs (note the exclusions mentioned above). Average across different programs within elementary and secondary, respectively.

Undergraduate graduation requirements	Averages	
	Elementary	Secondary
A. Credit hours required in general studies (Any courses offered outside the education school/department, e.g., liberal arts. If areas of concentration, major fields of study, etc. are required for teacher candidates, include the average number of credit hours required in these areas.)	-	-
B. Credit hours required in student teaching/practicum	10.5	9.8
C. Credit hours required in professional studies (Those courses offered by the education school/department as part of the preparation of teachers, EXCLUDING CREDIT HOURS IN STUDENT TEACHING/PRACTICUM.)	31.3	19.0
D. Check whether semester or quarter hours are used: semester ☐ quarter ☐		
E. Check length of your teacher education program: 4 year ☐ 5 year ☐ Other ☐ Specify _____		

- II. Within the credit hours required for professional studies (Q.I.C), there are core requirements. Core requirements consist of those courses that all students must take and those that students must select from a specified group of courses with similar content, excluding student teaching/practicum. Estimate the percent of theory and methods in the core requirements for elementary and secondary teacher education.

Core requirements	Averages	
	Elementary	Secondary
A. Percent theory (theoretical principles to explain teaching and learning)	45	56
B. Percent methods (techniques for teaching subject matter)	55	44

- III. A. Check high, medium, or low to indicate your preference for each of the following measures for improving the quality of undergraduate teacher candidates in your school/department of education.

- B. Check yes or no to indicate whether your school/department of education has implemented each of the following activities in the past 5 years.

Candidates in your school/department of education.				Percents	
A. Preference			Measures to improve teacher candidate quality	B. Implemented	
High	Medium	Low		Yes	No
47	40	12	1. Raising criteria for entrance to the school/department of education	74	26
52	41	7	2. Making the curriculum more rigorous/challenging for students	85	14
15	28	57	3. Extending the length of teacher education beyond 4 years	5	94
			4. Other (specify)		

- IV. Check high, medium or low to indicate the importance of each of the following methods to improve the quality of the curriculum for undergraduate teacher preparation in your school/department of education.

Methods to improve quality of curriculum for undergraduate teacher preparation	Percents		
	Importance		
	High	Medium	Low
A. Increase the amount of required student teaching/practicum	28	32	40
B. Increase the number of required professional studies credit hours	15	44	41
C. Increase the number and/or quality of required general studies credit hours. If you checked high or medium importance, indicate which areas:	30	41	28
Math ☐ Science ☐ Communication/language skills ☐ Other ☐ Specify _____			

- V. If your school/department of education were to raise standards significantly for undergraduate teacher preparation, what, if any, adverse effect would there be on your school/department's ability to support itself financially?

Little or none ☐ moderate ☐ major ☐

Person completing the form _____ Title _____
School _____ State _____ Phone _____

ED (NCES) 2379-16, 11/82

Note: Some national summary estimates are provided here. Headings (e.g., "averages," "percents," etc.) for these estimates were not included on the original questionnaire.